

REMARKS

Claims 1, 5, 19, 32, 35-37, 39-41, 43, 45-47, and 82-85 have been amended to correct obvious typographical errors and more particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter Applicants regard as their invention. Support for the amendments can be found throughout the specification. No new matter has been added.

Claims 1-85 are now pending in the application; claims 70-81 have been withdrawn from consideration by the Examiner as directed to a non-elected invention.

Applicants note with appreciation the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter.

Rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph

In the Office Action, claim 5 was rejected as being unclear. As seen in the claim listing above, claim 5 has been amended to remove certain redundant language. Applicants thus urge that claim 5, as amended, fully complies with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Claim 45 was rejected as indefinite due to the use of tradenames in the claim. As seen in the claim listing above, claim 45 has been amended to remove the tradenames to which the Examiner objected. Applicants note that claim 32 has been similarly amended. Applicants urge that the amended claims fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections is appropriate and such action is requested.

Rejection of claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

In the Office Action, claims 1-18, 20-31, 33, 34, 37, 38, 41, 42, 45-48, 50, 52-69 and 82-85 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as unpatentable over Kato et al., U.S. Patent 5,821,204 ("the '204 patent"), Kato et al., U.S. Patent 5,906,967 ("the '967 patent"), and Kato et al., U.S. Patent 5,998,339 ("the '339 patent"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

The Examiner has stated that the '204 patent "discloses a thrust bearing having a sliding surface composed of a resin composition which comprises . . . a carbon fiber, . . . a polytetrafluoroethylene, . . . a graphite . . . and the balance being an aromatic polyetherketone resin such as polyetheretherketone." The Examiner then takes the position that the '204 patent meets the limitations of pending claim 1, because "the thermal conductivity value [of] the pitch-based carbon fibers [of the '204 patent]" is "the same or similar" as the fibers required by claim 1 and certain dependent claims.

The Examiner then describes the '967 patent as disclosing a non-sticking sliding part comprising "a mixture of a fluororesin such as a polytetrafluoroethylene; a thermoplastic resin . . . such as polyphenylene sulfide, polyetheretherketone, aromatic polyester, thermoplastic polyimide and polyamideimide; and . . . a fibrous filler such as pitch-based carbon fibers." The Examiner again asserts that the thermal conductivity of the fibers described in the '967 patent meets the limitations of the pending claims.

The Examiner describes the '339 patent as disclosing a wet-type sliding apparatus including "a sliding surface consisting of a resin composition comprising . . . a carbon fiber and . . . a fluorocarbon polymer, the balance being substantially an aromatic polyetherketone resin or a polyarylene sulfide resin." Again, the Examiner asserts that the disclosure of the '339 patent meets the limitations of the rejected claims.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of record do not apply to the amended claims. Each of independent claims 1, 37, 41, 46, and 82-86 has been amended to recite that the compositions include a graphitized pitch-based carbon fiber additive. None of the Kato patents teach or suggest the use of such graphitized pitch-based carbon fibers. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that the Kato patents, whether alone or in combination, cannot render obvious the claimed compositions.

Moreover, all of the remaining claims under consideration depend from one of the independent claims amended as described above. These claims are therefore allowable as being dependent from an allowable claim.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is proper and the same is requested.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that the subject application is in a condition for allowance. Early and favorable action is requested.

If for any reason a fee is required, a fee paid is inadequate or credit is owed for any excess fee paid, you are hereby authorized and requested to charge Deposit Account No. **04-1105**.

Respectfully submitted,



David G. Conlin, Reg. No. 27026
Mark D. Russett, Reg. No. 41281

EDWARDS & ANGELL, LLP
P.O. Box 55874
Boston, MA 02205
Telephone: 617-439-4444
Facsimile: 617-439-4170